

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM NEWS

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THIS is the first issue of a new Museum publication, the Children's Museum News. There has long been a desire on the part of many of the young people who attend the Art Talks, the Motion Pictures, the School of Design, and other Museum activities, for some printed material on the Museum's collections and classes. The Children's Museum News is

meant to answer that desire. It will contain appreciative analyses of works of art in the Museum collections, articles on activities, and other items of interest to children. It will be sent to members of the Museum, and distributed to those of the younger generation who are regular in their attendance at the various classes.

A GREEK MYTH IN TAPESTRY

OLD tapestries are very interesting. The one which the Toledo Museum owns is a beautiful one made soon after the year 1500. At that time people were beginning to think about the stories of the old Greeks and Romans. Few people could read the written story, but many could read the pictured story.

Our tapestry pictures the old Greek myth called the Calydonian Boar Hunt, which goes something like this:—

In Greece there was born to Althea, queen of Calydon, a baby boy, Meleager. She was told that he would live so long as a stick on the hearth did not burn up. How Althea hurried to snatch the stick away from the fire, and how carefully she put it away so that it would not get near the fire again! She wanted Meleager to grow up and do real things when he became a man. And Meleager grew stronger and stronger and more and more courageous, until he was called one of the bravest men of his land. He was one of the heroes who went to hunt for the Golden Fleece with Jason in his ship, the Argos. And Althea, his mother, was happy until a dreadful thing happened.

Goddesses had ways of their own in those days and Artemis, goddess of the moon and of

the hunt, had strong ideas about loyalty. She felt that Meleager's father, King of Calydon, had neglected her, and she, in anger, sent a big brown wild boar to ruin his country.

Brave Meleager seeing the danger, called all of the heroes of Greece to come and help to rid the land of the terrible monster. Even Atalanta, the swift girl runner, joined in the hunt, and she it was who first wounded the boar. But it was Meleager who killed it and gave its head to her. Meleager's uncles became jealous and took the prize away from Atalanta, whereupon Meleager killed them. His mother, Althea, hearing of her brothers' death, brought out the hidden stick and threw it into the fire, and then killed herself, feeling certain that Meleager's life would close when the stick was consumed.

This is the story told by our tapestry. Can you read the pictured story, part by part, as the people did four hundred years ago?

As you look for the story take note of the way in which the artist made a design of it, of the way in which he made all parts of the story hold together, and of the beautiful and imperishable colors used by the Brussels weaver who made it.

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SIXTEENTH CENTURY FLEMISH TAPESTRY

Very old tapestries have but few colors, but these are bright and lovely still, for dyers were masters and knew how to make the colors fast. How beautiful the tapestry colors are on the stone wall of the Gothic Hall! Let us look at them. You will first see the red-orange, and then probably the blue-green which adds to the beauty of the red-orange, and then possibly the greyed light yellow, cool and quiet, and last you may find the dark orange, almost black, used in the boar's head and in some other places.

How beautiful the red-orange is! Just see how often it is used, how it is repeated through the picture, sometimes in large spots, sometimes in small spots, but always in an orderly way. You will find it in a large cloak, a dress, a sleeve, a string of beads, a piece of carving, as well as in the burning fire. And nearly always close by you will find the blue-green with the greyed light yellow, cool and quiet.

If you will go from spot to spot of red-orange starting on either side, you will find it will lead you to the big boar's head on the golden dish in the hands of Atalanta. In fact the red-orange will lead you to each interesting part of the story.

And now stand away from the tapestry and see that one side weighs just as much as the

other, figure groups and color groups balancing each other perfectly. And while you are looking do not fail to notice the border of fruits and flowers that is the frame for the pictured story.

In other issues of our Children's News you will read how tapestries were used, and how they were made on hand looms by master weavers.

LESSONS IN DESIGN

IF YOU are one of the boys or girls chosen from your school to go to the Toledo Museum of Art School of Design this year, you will learn many things that sound at first appalling, like motif, repetition, value, balance, design, related color, complementary color and harmony of color, dynamic shape and composition.

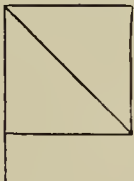
All of these things and many others are taught so simply and learned so easily and with such fun in the learning that you will be amazed at the end of the year to find that you have a foundation of knowledge of art on which you can build and keep on building for the rest of your life. You will know a little of why the great painters have used just the colors that they have, and placed their

figures or trees or rocks or houses in one place instead of another; you will know how to go to work to create pleasing surroundings; you will learn many happy secrets that will make life more interesting; things that once were thought to be born in genius, and yet they are yours for the asking.

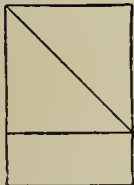
Your first lesson is to make an original abstract motif in a dynamic symmetry root-two rectangle. "What is that?" you say. But it is all so simple, when it is explained to you. Can you make a square? Yes, any one can make a square—four equal sides and four equal angles. Do you know what a diagonal is? Well!—oh yes—you've had it in school—or perhaps you haven't—anyway you can draw a line from one corner of your square to the other crossing the middle—like that.



That is a diagonal—a straight line between opposite corners of the square. The diagonal has many uses of which you will learn later. From the upper corner drop your diagonal along the side of the square like that—



Now make the other side the same length and connect the ends—



That is a dynamic root-two rectangle and a very beautiful shape—why you will learn later. We use this shape many times and when you are told to make a design in a root-two rectangle that is what it is.

Draw this rectangle on a sheet of paper without the inside lines—



leaving more space at the top than at the sides and more still at the bottom. This is a very simple spacing for good margins.

Now put in some new diagonals—what is a diagonal? Oh yes, you remember now—from corner to corner—this way, now a horizontal line that runs the way of the and one the other way—through the center—



These are called construction lines—because you are now to construct on them an abstract motif—that is, a design which is not a boat, nor a figure, just a shape that means nothing, but fills half the space. This you paint in India ink, and there you have a balance of light and dark. Your teachers explain all

of these steps very much more clearly than this.



A MOTIF
THE FIRST PROBLEM IN DESIGN

Now you sign your problem and find the very best place to put your name in printed letters—and you will be surprised to know that you have learned something of composition within space, balance of light and dark, the law of margins, and lettering arrangement. You keep this motif carefully in your locker because you are going to do something very interesting with this same motif next Saturday.

When you leave the class this first Saturday you are told to choose your favorite painting as you go through the galleries to the front door. Some of the boys and girls like one, others another, and you like something quite different. You argue about it. You decide to come early next Saturday so that you can have more time to look at the pictures.

Well, that wasn't so bad for a first lesson in Art. In fact, it was easy—but what are you going to do with that motif? You'll know next Saturday.

When next Saturday comes you are on hand long before time, and you really decide which picture you like best. You go into class with your motif and your paints from the locker.

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You hear a talk on repetition. And then you repeat your motif, nine times like this—



A SURFACE PATTERN
USING THE MOTIF OF PROBLEM 1

arranging it side by side, or every other one upside down, or inverted, and when it is all laid out and drawn in you find you have made an allover design or a surface pattern. You tell the teacher where you have seen surface patterns—on her dress—on the sofa at home—on the carpet—oh, just about everywhere. Of course you'll look for some others during the week and bring something in to class that has an abstract design. That is harder to find than a design of flowers but perhaps you'll find something.

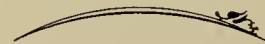
Perhaps on the next Saturday you forget to bring anything to class, but the teacher evidently counted on that as her table is piled high with things, but she won't show them until your allover patterns are finished in black and white.

Then she picks out about ten of the best of your designs and makes a little exhibition of them and tells you what use could be made of them. Then she shows the silk patterns, tiles,

a small rug, a piece of carpet, some cretonne, a handkerchief, all of them with allover abstract designs and she talks about them and some of your designs are better than those that have been woven or printed. That is your second lesson—and you all look at each other in surprise.

Of course you like this class when you can so quickly learn to do something of interest. You are told to be sure of your favorite picture in the Museum and to have its name and artist on a slip of paper when you come into class next week.

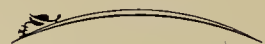
In the next issue of the Children's Museum News we will have something to say about the succeeding problems in the first year class in Color and Design.



ART TALKS AND MOTION PICTURES

You will be interested in visiting a very old country this season, and this is to invite you to the opening of the Art Talks Saturday, October 4, at 2:30 P. M. "Landing in Egypt" will be the first event, to be followed on successive Saturdays by a journey to the pyramids, a day in the country, a visit to a pottery, a goldsmith's shop, and other interesting places. Each Saturday's talk will be illustrated with lantern slides and will be repeated on Sundays at 2:00 and 3:20 P. M.

You will enjoy the free motion pictures, too, for this year they are to be better than ever before, with many surprises. Try to come on Saturday afternoons as the lecture hall is always so crowded on Sunday afternoons.



In one of his books, Dr. Denman Ross says: "It must be remembered that in teaching Design we are teaching Order, order in drawing and painting, and in everything else; order in our thinking, order in our actions, order in every kind of work. Disorder, therefore, is to be avoided as much as possible."